

27. (Amended) The fiber bundle of Claim 1, wherein said non-elastomeric microfilaments and said elastomeric microfilaments are different colors, and wherein said fiber bundle is the color of the non-elastomeric microfilaments in its non-stretched condition and said fiber bundle is the color of the elastomeric microfilaments in its stretched condition.

28. (Three times amended) A fiber bundle comprising a plurality of drawn bulked plastically deformed non-elastomeric polypropylene microfilaments substantially surrounding and covering from view in an unstretched condition a plurality of elastomeric polyurethane microfilaments that are shorter than and less bulky than said non-elastomeric microfilaments, said elastomeric polyurethane and non-elastomeric polypropylene microfilaments originating from a common multicomponent fiber having elastomeric polyurethane and non-elastomeric polypropylene components which split upon thermal activation, and the weight ratio of the non-elastomeric polypropylene microfilaments within the fiber bundle is substantially identical to the weight ratio of the non-elastomeric polypropylene component within the multicomponent fiber.

30. (Three times amended) A fabric comprising a plurality of drawn bulked plastically deformed non-elastomeric microfilaments substantially surrounding and covering from view in an unstretched condition a plurality of elastomeric microfilaments that are shorter than and less bulky than said non-elastomeric microfilaments, said elastomeric and non-elastomeric microfilaments originating from a common multicomponent fiber having elastomeric and non-elastomeric components, wherein said elastomeric polymer has a solubility parameter (δ) sufficiently different from said non-elastomeric polymer so that said elastomeric component and said non-elastomeric component split upon thermal activation and further wherein the weight ratio of the non-elastomeric microfilaments within the fiber bundle is substantially identical to the weight ratio of the non-elastomeric component within the multicomponent fiber.

48. (Three times amended) A drawn splittable multicomponent fiber comprising:
at least one component comprising an elastomeric polymer, at least a portion of which is exposed to the outer peripheral surface of said fiber, which is elastically deformed so that said elastomeric component is capable of substantially complete recovery to its original length upon release of drawing tension; and

at least one component comprising a non-elastomeric polymer, at least a portion of which is exposed to the outer peripheral surface of said fiber, which is plastically deformed and longer than said elastomeric component upon dissociation therefrom so that said non-elastomeric component maintains substantially its same length after drawing upon release of drawing tension,

wherein said elastomeric polymer has a solubility parameter (δ) sufficiently different from said non-elastomeric polymer so that said elastomeric component and said non-elastomeric component split upon thermal treatment and said elastomeric and non-elastomeric polymer components are arranged in distinct unocclusive cross-sectional segments so that the polymer components are not physically impeded from being separated from one another.

59. (Three times amended) A fabric comprising a plurality of drawn splittable multicomponent fibers comprising at least one component comprising a non-elastomeric polymer and at least one component comprising an elastomeric polymer, wherein at least a portion of each of said non-elastomeric and elastomeric polymer components is exposed to the outer peripheral surface of said fiber, wherein said at least one polymer component comprising a non-elastomeric polymer is plastically deformed and longer than said elastomeric component upon dissociation therefrom so that said non-elastomeric component maintains substantially its same length after drawing upon release of drawing tension and wherein said at least one polymer component comprising an elastomeric polymer is elastically deformed so that said elastomeric component is capable of substantially complete recovery to its original length upon release of drawing tension and release of adhesion to the non-elastomeric component;
wherein said elastomeric polymer has a solubility parameter (δ) sufficiently different from said non-elastomeric polymer so that said elastomeric component and said non-elastomeric

component split upon thermal activation and said elastomeric and non-elastomeric polymer components are arranged in distinct unocclusive cross-sectional segments so that the polymer components are not physically impeded from being separated from one another.

63. (Twice amended) A fiber bundle comprising a plurality of drawn bulked plastically deformed non-elastomeric microfilaments substantially surrounding and covering from view in an unstretched condition a plurality of elastomeric microfilaments that are shorter than and less bulky than said non-elastomeric microfilaments, said elastomeric and non-elastomeric microfilaments originating from a common multicomponent fiber whose cross section consists of contiguous segments of elastomeric and non-elastomeric components, wherein said elastomeric polymer has a solubility parameter (δ) sufficiently different from said non-elastomeric polymer so that said elastomeric component and said non-elastomeric component split upon thermal activation and after separation the elastomeric and non-elastomeric microfilaments can be recombined to cumulatively define the approximate cross section of said multicomponent fiber.

64. (Twice amended) A fiber bundle comprising a plurality of drawn bulked plastically deformed non-elastomeric microfilaments substantially surrounding and covering from view in an unstretched condition a plurality of elastomeric microfilaments that are shorter than and less bulky than said non-elastomeric microfilaments, said elastomeric and non-elastomeric microfilaments originating from a common multicomponent fiber having elastomeric and non-elastomeric components, wherein said elastomeric polymer has a solubility parameter (δ) sufficiently different from said non-elastomeric polymer so that said elastomeric component and said non-elastomeric component split upon thermal activation and further wherein said elastomeric microfilaments have substantially the same denier as said non-elastomeric microfilaments.

65. (Twice amended) A fiber bundle comprising a plurality of drawn bulked plastically deformed non-elastomeric microfilaments substantially surrounding and covering from view in n unstretched condition a plurality of elastomeric microfilaments that are shorter

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than and less bulky than said non-elastomeric microfilaments, said elastomeric and non-elastomeric microfilaments originating from a common multicomponent fiber having elastomeric and non-elastomeric components, wherein said elastomeric polymer has a solubility parameter (δ) sufficiently different from said non-elastomeric polymer so that said elastomeric component and said non-elastomeric component split upon thermal activation and further wherein the denier of said fiber bundle and the denier of said multicomponent fiber are substantially identical.

Please add the following new claim:

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89. The fiber bundle of Claim 17, wherein said non-elastomeric microfilaments and said elastomeric microfilaments have a substantially triangular cross section.
